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HOUSE AND SENATE HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN PRAISE AGREEMENT ON CHEMICAL SECURITY MEASURE

Washington, D.C. – Senate Homeland Security Committee Chairman Susan Collins (R-ME) and House Homeland Security Committee Chairman Peter King (R-NY) today praised an agreement reached on vital chemical security legislation. This agreement, which was reached by House and Senate authorizing Committee Chairs, will be submitted to the Appropriations Committee for their consideration, paving the way for these provisions to be included in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) spending bill.

“This is a major victory. I think all parties realized that this effort was simply too important to fail,” said Senator Collins. “This agreement will allow us to move forward in our efforts to implement needed security standards at our nation’s chemical plants. I am very pleased that strong authority is included for DHS to establish performance-based security measures for high-risk chemical plants and to enforce them. Our agreement will give the Secretary the ultimate authority to shut down chemical facilities that do not take appropriate steps to protect the American public.”

“This is an historic step forward in the security of our homeland. We worked hard to reach this agreement that will better secure our nation and protect the American people,” Chairman King said. “The Department of Homeland Security needs the authority to ensure that our nation’s chemical plants are properly secured—and that’s exactly what we’ve delivered.”

The agreement reached tonight would:

- For the first time, give DHS the authority to require high risk chemical plants to implement security measures.
- Direct DHS to establish risk-based and performance-based standards for chemical facilities to help protect against terrorist attacks.

- Require chemical plants to conduct vulnerability assessments and create and implement site security plans based on their specific vulnerabilities, subject to approval by the Secretary of DHS.
- Give DHS the authority to require compliance with its security requirements, including the authority to audit and inspect facilities, and to shut down a facility if it is not complying.
- Provide strong interim authority for up to three years until permanent, comprehensive authority is enacted.

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